

## RUSSIA AND THE WEST IN IRAN

by Louis Goethe Dreyfus, Minister plenipotentiary. During his term the American-Iranian Cultural Relations Society was reactivated in March, 1943. The Minister was valiantly seconded by Mrs. Dreyfus, whose charitable activities among the poor of Teheran (she founded a clinic in the slum area) gained her great respect and popularity and a high Iranian decoration from the hands of the Shah.

Unfortunately the Minister's relations with the Persian Gulf Command were reputed to be strained. Although officially the military authorities were not responsible for the conduct of foreign affairs, yet the power of an army commander in his theater of operations was so great, that in practice it overlapped the area of the Ambassador's activity. Even the diplomatic pouches of the American Embassy were said to be subject to military inspection. This overlapping of authority was bound to produce tensions unless one side completely capitulated to the other. The only permanent solution for such ills could be provided by adequate co-ordination of departmental responsibilities in Washington. And as this did not seem to occur, the over-all American effort in Iran lacked the efficiency of good team-work in contrast to the smooth co-operation among the British agencies. After the Teheran Conference Dreyfus was transferred to Iceland, and rumor had it that this departure was not quite divorced from the tense state of Army-Embassy relations. He was replaced by Ambassador Leland B. Morris, who after a few months in office was succeeded by Ambassador Wallace Murray. It was during Morris' term of office that the oil crisis took place, and it was he who made the important statement that the United States

respected the Iranian  
decision to refuse the oil concessions.

The arrival of Ambassador Murray coincided with the general collapse of inter-Allied harmony in Iran and with the dangerous strain in Communist-nationalist relations. The inevitable crisis was ripening and demanded a clearer definition of the American attitude. It was Murray's onerous privilege to serve with distinction at the time of the dramatic crisis in Soviet-Iranian relations that occurred soon after the end of the war.

On the whole, the American Embassy enjoyed prestige and respect. Perhaps it might have been wiser not to change Ambassadors so frequently during a war. On the other hand, the Embassy might have